7: Thompson--374 [2] J-4 (no date) 1937 Laotians
116, 433

"Laotian industry, if such it may be called, aims only to satisfy local needs. It is almost exclusively a family affair in which primitive tools are used with inevitably crude results. Only in precious metals and ivory or wood carving has Laos an industry that merits the name. Weaving and boat-building are also excellent, but as yet the output is confined to the artisan's personal wants."

10: d'Orleans--363 T-3 (1891-92) 1894 Laos
116, 433

"In short, trusting to what I saw and to the information supplied me, I arrive at the following conclusions. The Laos is not nearly so rich a country as has been generally asserted, the trade of Luang Prabang more especially being insignificant. There is not an opening for more than one or two French houses, who should make it their business to act as middlemen for an European stock of goods, to purchase the native products, to develop as far as possible among a people naturally inclined to be lazy local industries, to undertake, with Kas workmen, the extraction of minerals and the cutting of timber. But in order to establish our political and commercial influence in the Laos, it is not enough that we should speak our mind at Bangkok, we must make the most of the advantages which the proximity of the coasts of Annam give us."

la Sainte-Chapelle, a la seconde boutique, a l'enseigne du Voyageur. 175* 114 /127/

naivete, the work /111/ does not have the ring of sincerity which constitutes the merit of the Dutch account. It was probably written from the reminiscences of Father J. M. Leria (1) and is of value

1. Father Giovanni-Maria Leria, a Piedmontese Jesuit, left Cambodia in April 1642 accompanied by some Cochinchinese neophytes with a caravan of Laotian traders who were returning to their country. He remained in Laos for five years "despite the opposition and the intrigues of the bonzes" and did not leave Vientiane until December 2, 1647. (Cf. Fr. Garnier, 1871, and Father Alex. de Rhodes, 1651.)

only as a document at second hand. It will nevertheless be of some interest to extract the following passages:

"In the East it (the kingdom of the 'Langiens') has the kingdom of Tonkin which stretches to the southwest towards Cochinchina, and further to the South that of Cambodia; in the southwest and the west the kingdom of Pegou; and in the north that of Ava and the province called U or Lu (2), and still further again to the north as 131? 175*

2. See below, p. 176, note 1.

far as the frontiers which limit it in this direction, where there are certain peoples who are called Gnai. . . .

"Because of its fertility and because the things necessary to life are found there in abundance, the kingdom is so heavily populated that only a little while ago in the census which was taken of persons who were /112/ judged fit to serve the king at war and to bear arms, 500,000 were counted, not including the old people who are so numerous and so rubust that even of those who are a hundred years old a very large army might be formed for the defense of the kingdom if the need should arise. . . 421 433 161

"The chief city and the one in which the king ordinarily stays is situated in the middle of the kingdom, eighteen degrees toward our Arctic pole, and is called Langione. It has good moats and extremely high walls on one side, and on the other the great river to defend it against the undertakings of enemies. . . . The royal palace, the structure and symmetry of which are admirable, can 633 174 344

SIAM'S VIOLATION OF THE 1889 ARRANGEMENT
VARIOUS INCIDENTS
OCCUPATION OF LOWER LAOS--NAVAL DEMONSTRATION AT PAK-NAM
ULTIMATUM AND TREATY OF OCTOBER 3, 1893

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The arrangement of 1889 was unfortunately much too lenient. Even several years after the fall of the great and clairvoyant patriot Jules Ferry, however, and as a consequence of the profound discredit into which the whole colonial idea and cause had fallen among us, our political situation made it impossible for us to take more effective measures and to assert the rights of our protégé, the emperor of Annam, in a more pressing way. [11] Nor could we give full satisfaction to the completely legitimate requests for protection which were made by the king of Luang-Prabang.

Our political difficulties were perfectly well-known to the Siamese government. Emboldened by our hesitation, it consented, in agreement with Great Britain, to arrangements and delimitations of frontiers in the Shan States which annihilated the plan conceived by Jules Ferry in 1883 and canceled all the results of the Deloncle treaty concluded in 1884 (1) with Upper Burma, which was then

(1) See Appendices VII and VIII.

independent. This treaty, in effect, recognized as limits of "French Tonkin the Mékong River, from the point where it leaves China as far as Xieng-Sên," including the Pahn-Na on the left bank, the principality of Muong-Sing and the States of Pou-Kha, Xieng-Khong and Xieng-Sên to the west of Nam-Hou.

In exchange for this territory--a gracious gift which cost it all the less in that it did not belong to it--Great Britain obtained Karennée (or Karèng) from Siam. The latter territory was situated in the valley of the Salouen, and had been under Siamese domination for centuries.

The delimitation of the Anglo-Siamese frontiers, including those of the Shan States of Xieng-Maï, Lam-Poun and Muong-Haut, was completed only in 1892.

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In 1889 M. Pavie was sent on another mission and was accompanied by many civil and military assistants whose particular province was to be topography and the natural sciences. A

Colonial 175 654 433 439

commercial and industrial mission was attached to the former, and it was to study the question of means of communication by land and river, to create trading posts, to collect samples, to examine the commercial methods in use and to determine the nature and value of the products of the Mékong basin. Funds for this mission, which left France with an initial stock of fifteen tons of various kinds of merchandise, were provided by a syndicate which had just been formed, with an initial capital of 100,000 francs, under the name of French Syndicate [12] of Upper Laos. It included representatives of Parisian trade and industry who had united for the experiment thanks to the initiative of M. Léon Tharel, the president of the group.

All throughout 1890 and 1891 the missions fulfilled their tasks with ardor, not without constant struggle against the implicit hostility of the Siamese, which although occasionally concealed under an [Illustration here] affable outward mask nonetheless continued to manifest itself and created obstacles everywhere in the hope of discouraging the valiant explorers and causing their work to fail.

In spite of the difficulties which they encountered, the two missions were successful in their delicate enterprise and the results of the latter were most significant. From that point on we were in possession of precise information concerning the whole region extending from Yunnan to Cambodia.

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What was more, by continuing the tradition begun by Mouhot, the [13] Lagrée mission, Harmand, Néis, etc. we had made contact with the Laotian people and made them know and love the French name. In us they saluted their future liberators and the ones who would come to free them from the brutal and detested Siamese yoke.

Finally--a fact of no less importance--thanks to the activities of the commercial mission, to the trading posts which it had established and to the contacts and arrangements which it had prepared, we were in possession from that time on of private commercial interests in the Mékong basin. Thus greater force was given to the rights which we already had to intervene in Laos against Siamese intrigues in the name of our protégés, the emperor of Annam and the king of Cambodia.

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Frightened and surprised by the results which France had achieved in so short a time in the Mékong valley, despite the ambushes which it had laid on all sides and the hostile maneuvers which it had supported, Siam began to fear that France might invade its Laotian territories. It then invoked the friendship of Great Britain and

133 The market of Bassac owes its importance to the proximity of the plateau. It is therefore a storehouse for the Laotians of the whole 433 region, a reservoir [51] from which they draw. The part which it 438 plays is obviously a fine one, and no more can be asked of it.

There has also been much discussion as to whether large-scale breeding of buffalo and oxen would be successful there, for at present livestock is found only in the villages situated near the Sédone, that is to say, quite far from the plateau. The question has not yet been settled, and sufficient tests have not yet been made.

133 At the southernmost corner of the plateau there is a conical mountain about 800 meters in altitude which Francis Garnier baptized The Breast [le Téton] because of its shape, and to which he later gave the name Lagrée's Peak [Pic de Lagrée] in commemoration of the President of the Exploratory Commission of 1866.

[224] The elephant hunters of southern Laos go to the mountainous region of Saravane and Attopeu every year, and there they capture an annual quota of fifty to a hundred elephants.

133 To the east of Attopeu the mountains are inhabited by well-nigh independent Kha tribes--Cédangs, Djarais, Rognaos and [177 797] Bahnars. The two latter tribes have almost been pacified, thanks to the persevering efforts of the Christian missionaries of Kon-Toum. This point is the center of the mission, and through it passes the road from Attopeu to Qui-Nhon. It crosses the Annamitic Chain 563 between Kon-Xalam and Kon-Tiorak at an altitude of about 900 meters. Near Attopeu this same road goes up over Pou-Satièng (400 meters), the last ramification of the great chain, which separates the basin of the Sé-Souk from that of the Sé-Kémane.

[135] This region of Pou-Satièng, Sé-Souk and Sé-Kémane has long been known to be rich in gold deposits.

§ IV--HYDROLOGY

a.--THE MÉKONG--GENERALITIES

133 It has often been said, and rightly so, that the Nile constituted Egypt. In the same way it can be said that the Mékong makes Laos, for is it not the river which gives what vitality there is to these vast isolated regions? Is it not the river which, by its annual floods, helps the growth of rice? Does it not supply, with its fish, a large

Tribal Tai

291 the Deng-Thais, is applied to the edges of the gown. It is further
563 ornamented [233] on the outside edge opposite the buttonholes with colored silk embroidery which does not go down below the waist.

This garment is also folded in half lengthwise and worn rolled around the body with the sleeves left hanging.

302 The women wear their hair parted down the middle in front
301 and rolled into a sort of long tassel behind which is contained within the folds of a little turban. The latter is wound above the forehead and the free end inserted under the first turn, on the nape of the neck. This headdress is quite similar to that of the Annamite women in Tonkin.

In certain regions of Laos, Thai women wind their hair into a sort of coil which girls wear loosely down their neck and betrothed or married women wear on top of the head. Thai jewelry is made of heavy silver and is of the same type as Laotian jewelry. The men wear bracelets on their wrists.

262 Food. The Thai diet is like that of the Laotians, but they prefer
264 non-glutinous white rice and use chopsticks like the Chinese and Annamites.

276 The use of betel is quite widespread among the Thais, but in contrast to the Laotians they keep their teeth white. The Thais smoke the oily, opiated tobacco of Tonkin and China in bamboo waterpipes whose tiny bowls only contain a small pinch of tobacco. They also smoke a local variety of tobacco, either in cigarettes or in pipes with a highly worked clay bowl into which a long stem ending in a glass or jade mouthpiece is inserted.

156 Character. Although serious and reflective, the Thais have a vivacious and friendly character. They are somewhat cold in appearance, but are sound friends and highly affable when one gets to know them better.

[701] Gentler and more timid than the Laotians, they have no taste for the art of war and it is difficult to get them to stay in the native militia.

• 433 They are very self-seeking and much more miserly than the Lao-
438 tians. [234] It should be noted, moreover, that since they produce everything themselves and are a people of farmers and livestock
156 breeders, they do not have, by virtue of their ever sedentary occupations, the opportunities which these latter have to enjoy fairly high profits resulting from commercial transactions, nor the special habits which contact with different races gives.

181 The Thais love pleasure and celebrations. Guaranteed their daily
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Kha

result. But the Kha ideal is to possess a battery of gongs of different sizes and timbres, and with these they manage to obtain quite perfect chords.

Industry. Withdrawn in their mountains where they live in small isolated groups, the Khas use their leisure time to make many basket-work and hollow-ware products which have a mark of elegance and a great deal of delicacy. Other tribes make paper from wood pulp, weave mats from rattan and bamboo bark, etc. They use all these products in trade.

Finally, certain Khas exploit deposits of iron ore and transform it into farming implements, while others wash gold-bearing sands.

In general, although the Khas are industrious they work only to procure what is strictly indispensable. They cannot resign themselves to staying away from home for any length of time and dread any stay in the low country, which they say is unhealthy for them. Since they have particular aptitudes for woodcutting, however, they have been successfully employed to cut teak wood in the forests on the right bank of the Mekong which are situated in Siamese territory. But it must be admitted that there they are in mountainous country and in the midst of forests, as in their native region.

The Khas of southern Laos. In southern Laos Khas are found who differ very little from those of Upper Laos. We shall not concern ourselves with them, but shall deal briefly with the many more numerous ones who have particular mores and customs.

The Djarais, the Rades, the Bahnars, the Cedangs, the Peunongs, the Rognaos (1), etc. are the principal types of these Kha tribes,

(1) See Appendix XVIII.

which for the most part are still independent.

These people are proud, large and muscular, supple, trained in all forms of bodily exercise, bold, warlike and brave.

These qualities, moreover, have been developed by their peculiar way of [257] [Illustration] [258] [Blank page] [259] life. Accustomed to hunting slaves from which they extracted large profits by selling them on the banks of the Mekong, these Khas have had to resort to continual expeditions in order to obtain their human game.

For many long years, in fact, they could acquire [Illustration here] the gongs, buffalo, metals, textiles, etc. which they needed only by selling captives, generally Annamites, whom they went and

436 It will perhaps be of some interest to note here that the peoples of Laos have no respect for European gold coins, [420] because their gold 822 is alloyed with copper! In this country, as in all of the Far East in 439 general, it is thought that gold is the noble metal par excellance, that 177 it is polluted and diminished by alloying it with copper, which is unworthy of it, and that it can endure being made into an alloy only with silver.

The only "gold" coins in use, and still not at all currently in northern Laos, are books of gold leaf the thickness of tinfoil. They come from China and bear the official stamps of the country's banks which put them into circulation as "merchandise" in the same way as bars of silver.

Weighing instruments

405 The weighing instruments used in Laos include the "Ta-Dieng" or "Sing," a Chinese steelyard made of wood which has three rows of graduations. It may have a hook or a single platform, and is used for weights ranging from one "Sang" (1.23849 kilograms) up to several piculs.

For weights of less than a "Sang" the same kind of Chinese steelyard, with a hook or platform, is used, but it is smaller and made of ivory or bone.

A small pair of beam scales with platforms shaped like cupels, which is called "Sing-Dieng," is used mainly for weighing precious metals and gems.

There are several series of weights for balances. They are made of bronze, iron or copper and are most diverse in shape, representing elephants, imaginary birds, hexagons, pentagons, cones, pyramids, etc.

2. TRADE COMMODITIES AND PRODUCTS OF EXCHANGE

438 Since there is no industry to speak of in Laos, the local products 241 which make up the basic commodities of interior trade and exports come mainly from agriculture, livestock raising, scavenging, fishing and hunting. Mention may be made, however, of certain products of local, not to say familial, industry which enter into interior commerce and to some extent into the trade which goes on with neighboring countries.

438 [421] These include cloth goods of pure silk, either plain or 433 spangled with gold, goods of silk blended with cotton, and wholly cotton goods, then articles of jewelry and goldsmithing, and finally metals and ores from the still rudimentary mining industry and pottery goods, edge-tools, basketry, etc.

439 use the present tense (1)?

651 (1) The fact is actually occurring at the present time, and has motivated the canceling of the eighty percent exemption. (See p.430, note.)

The discrepancy between the officially recognized exports and imports is a sure indication that we are here approaching the truth.

The remedy for this state of things is to make Laos freely open, on equal terms and both entering and leaving, to all goods and to all merchants. It means reducing all the duties levied to the single three percent ad valorem rate both entering and leaving. It means, in a word, parity [452] with our neighbor Siam which, after having left us the land, the water and the wild beasts of the forest, will continue, unless we take care, to be the only one to profit from our colony of Laos.

It will be objected that the remedy which we recommend would not prevent the Treasury from being cheated, since foreign goods introduced into Laos might still, as is the case at present, come in through a back door into the other parts of the Indo-Chinese union. But we reply that the situation is not at all the same. The Mekong is open over more than 2000 kilometers, and there the frontier is entirely a moral one, whereas between Laos and the other lands of Indo-China there are mountainous obstacles with only a few passages, and it would be enough merely to guard these, with respect to customs, in order to prevent fraud.

[453] [Illustration at top of page]

CHAPTER IX

INDUSTRY. ARTS AND TRADES.

433 The only purpose of industry and trades in Laos is to satisfy local
472 needs. Indeed, one cannot regard as export trade the sale of a few
463 silk or cotton goods of Laotian origin in the nearby regions.

Mention must first be made of what we may call the products of family industry. With a very few exceptions, there are no specialized workers pursuing a given trade, as regards the construction of houses and the manufacture of various useful articles, hunting and fishing devices, as well as in spinning, dyeing and weaving cloth and, in a

word, as regards everything connected with housing, furnishings, clothing, household articles, etc. Everyone--men, women and even children-- [454] is able to make the ordinary necessary articles by means of very simple methods and rudimentary tools. Thus it may be said that each house and each family represents a village in miniature.

The only industries really worthy of the name are embroidering on cloth, jewelry-making and working with gold and silver, ironmongery, brass-founding, pottery, basketry, the manufacture of certain lacquered articles, paper-making, wood and ivory carving, fresco painting, gold-washing and especially the making of pirogues, in which the natives show remarkable skill.

Weaving. The weaving of certain kinds of silk goods with various shaded effects and often spangled with gold, as well as embroidering on cloth, is practiced by a certain number of women in every locality which is of any importance.

The looms used for weaving are extremely simple, and yet brocaded stuffs are made in which the designs are obtained, as before the invention of the Jacquard loom, by isolating or alternatively raising certain woof threads by means of thin strips of bamboo.

Vegetable dyes are used, that is to say that they are produced by trees or plants which grow in the country. Dyeing methods are simple, yet despite this fact the colors last for a long time thanks to a mordant composed of alum or lemon juice. The fundamental colors are blue (indigo), red, yellow and black. With the aid of these dyes the women are able, either by suitably proportioned mixtures or by various juxtapositions on the threads or on the cloth, to obtain a great variety of shades.

For some fifteen years now tinctorial powders have also been used which have an aniline base and are of German origin. But these dyes fall far short of being as colorfast and long-lasting as the local dyes. Their colors do not merge as well, and with them it is impossible to obtain the harmonious shades which the tinctorial products of Laos give to cloth and to thread.

[455] For spangled cloth goods and embroidery, the gold thread in most widespread use is the one made by the Chinese. It consists of a strand of cotton on which a strip of paper gilded with fine gold a few tenths of a millimeter thick is wound in a spiral. Attempts have been made to introduce gold thread of European manufacture, but it has not met with favor on the part of the specialists, who have preferred the Chinese thread.

316 begun at judiciously chosen points [Illustration here] they can be accommodated to the existing means of communication and transport
313 if necessary. As for the sums needed to engage in a commercial,
185 mining or forest enterprise, it is difficult to determine these in any precise fashion for, depending on the region and the special conditions of the terrain, such matters may require more or less capital.

[518] For dealing in teak wood (1), for example, the sums needed

(1) A rigorous investigation made by a chief guardsman of the Laotian militia of the region of Xieng-Khong, on the left bank of the Mekong, has shown that the number of teak trees ready for cutting in the province of Muong-Sing is 4,975 in all, 2,000 of which are of exceptional size for the region, that is to say that their diameter varies between 0.3 and 0.6 meter. Counting the young shoots and young trees, the total number of teaks which we possess in Muong-Sing may be estimated at about 20,000.

Another group is situated on the right bank of the Mekong, in the vicinity of Pak-Lay and in the basin of the Nam-Poun. It includes from 10,000 to 12,000 teak trees ready for cutting, concessions for about half of which have been granted. (Bulletin économique de l'Indo-Chine, 1900.)

for purchase and transport would depend on the quantity which it was desired to export. As an average indication, the sum of 40,000 francs might be given for operations on 1,000 teak trees.

From the point of view of mineral resources, certain deposits require capital in the millions for their exploitation, while others might be worked profitably with sums varying between 250,000 to 500,000 francs.

433 In the way of industries which may be started at the present time,
185 we may cite only the establishment of rice distilleries in southern Laos and of a mechanical sawmill at Khone.

[273] A distillery could be set up without any great expense at the
[243] mouth of the Mekong and the Sedone, for example. Thanks to the price of glutinous rice which is five or six times less expensive in this region than at Pnom-Penh, the alcohol from such a distillery would find a certain market in Cambodia.

185 For several years now there has been talk of establishing a mechanical sawmill on the island of Khone which would obtain its
313 motive power from the nearby waterfalls. Besides teak wood (2),
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(2) Teak is generally regarded, although wrongly, as the wood

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traditions and the annals which I have been able to consult, they are the descendants of the last kings of the land before the Cham invasion. The kings of Cambodia have had to appeal to them for help on one or two critical occasions, and it was in return for services rendered that the king of Cambodia, up until recent times, used to send them presents every year (annual tribute, according to them, payment of which stopped only five years ago).

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They have never been willing to recognize our authority. The king of Pa-Tac-la, who is situated on the Laotian side, twice attacked the Government Commissioners of Stung-Treng when the latter were making a tour of inspection in this region, first in December 1894 and a second time in January 1897. They were given a severe lesson this second time, for the village was entirely destroyed and they suffered many losses. The Sadete Loum (the Master of water) settled on the Annamite side alongside the Master of fire after the affair, and since that time has given no further orders to our faithful Djarais.

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APPENDIX XIX
NOTE ON THE MEOS

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The Meo has a savage and distrustful character. He does not like the presence of foreigners, or even of people of his own race. Clinging to the side of a mountain, and always as high up as possible, he asks only to be allowed to live in peace in his wild solitude and bodes no ill to anyone provided he is left alone and independe

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He is a great hunter of wild beasts and large game. More industrious than the Thais, he makes all his farming implements himself (picks and shovels), as well as his wooden buckets and mills for grinding maize and paddy. He raises fine poultry, pigs, oxen, goats and horses with particular care and success. If he stays in one place for any length of time he also produces, in addition to the maize and rice which form the basis of his food supply and the opium which he smokes, very fine eggplants, gourds, sweet potatoes and non-sweetened batatas very much like the common potato, sorrel, green beans and all the French vegetables whose seeds are given him. On his heights he cultivates the fruit trees which merely vegetate in the plains, such as the peach tree, and the peaches which he harvests can compete without any fear with those of our own country.

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The Meo climbs like a cat. Over sheer paths, up ladders composed of a single bamboo pole standing upright in which notches are cut at regular intervals which are large enough for two toes, the Meo